

**MEETING SUMMARY
PROPERTY TAX ADMINISTRATION TASK FORCE
OCTOBER 12, 2000 9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM**

MOBILE HOME BREAK-OUT SESSION-9:00 AM to 9:50 AM

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT: Jimmy Alvarez, Morgan Gilreath, Alita Marlo, Ken Small, and Karl Zimmerman.

During this segment, group members clarified and prioritized problems with mobile home assessments in Florida; looked at the possible outcomes; and, identified the research and data needed from staff for the group to make recommendations to the full membership for possible solutions to the problems.

Alita Marlo was designated by the group as the spokesperson for the group.

See the attached flip chart replications headed "Mobile Home Focus Groups-Charts #1, #2, and #3", Attachment Page 1, for an outline of the discussion by the group.

In response to an inquiry by one of the members, Task Force Chair Jim Zingale outlined that the future organization for each meeting of the Task Force to include a mobile home break-out sessions part of a standing agenda for all future meetings.

FULL MEMBER SESSION-10:00 AM to 1:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rod Adams, Jimmy Alvarez, Keith Baker, Robert Banting (new, Florida Association of Realtors), Bill Coleman, Morgan Gilreath, Bill Graham, Rene Lewis, Alita Marlo, Fred Meeker, Randy Miller, Sharon Outland, John Robinson (new, representing the telecommunications industry), Ken Small, Bob McKee (for Florida Association of Counties), Bill Suber, Vicki Weber, Karl Zimmerman.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Herrle, Terry Lewis, Matt Ryan (new, Florida Home Builders Association)

Chairman Jim Zingale welcomed the membership and reminded everyone about the public nature of all items before the task force and member's responsibility to adhere to the standards outlined for them at the August 16, 2000, meeting. Mr. Zingale outlined the organizational structure for all future meetings of the Task Force to include the respective breakout sessions for the mobile home, tangible personal property, and assessment appeals focus groups, as well as full membership sessions.

The Chair polled members for any corrections to the August 16, 2000, meeting summary. Rene Lewis requested that the summary of the August 16, 2000, meeting be corrected to read into the record that the Task Force will continue to consider whether additional representation is needed from the electric cooperatives and/or the Appraisal Institute. The Chair described the documents provided in members' folders and stated copies were available to the audience at the rear of the meeting room.

Jim Zingale asked Lisa Echeverri, the Department's Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director, to present an overview of the Department's legislative concept development and the internal and external review process used to bring issues forward to the Florida Legislature. Ms. Echeverri announced October 26, 2000, as the deadline for public comment directly to the Department on proposed concepts before they are presented to the Governor and the Cabinet for consideration. She closed her presentation with an

explanation of the purpose for the Department's seven 2001 Legislative Concepts regarding property tax administration.

A brief discussion followed among the members as to whether member-specific items would be considered for inclusion in the Department's legislative package. Jim Zingale explained that legislative issues contained within the Department's package were designed to facilitate the administration of the tax laws and that member-specific issues not falling within that category should be carried forward to the Legislature by the member or his/her organization.

Next, the Chair asked Jeff Kielbasa to provide an update on the Department's progress in developing Real Property Guidelines. Mr. Kielbasa distributed a development schedule and described where the Department is within that schedule. He suggested that members who are interested in the guidelines attend the scheduled public workshops for input, and bring their observations back to the Task Force for presentation at future meetings. Mr. Kielbasa ended his presentation with an explanation that the development of the Market Area Guidelines would be running side-by-side with the real property guidelines and explained the difference between the two sets of guidelines under the Florida Statutes. Mr. Kielbasa specified that the Real Property and Market Area Guidelines would not be a work product of the Task Force.

Jim Zingale followed with an overview of the contents of the PTA Action Plan developed in counsel with the Auditor General to respond to the recommendations contained in the latest audit report on the Property Tax Administration Program. He explained the general outline of the action plan and the reporting process to which the Department is committed while carrying out the action plan steps. Members were requested to review the plan before they brought questions about the plan to the table.

MEMBER SPECIFIC ITEMS:

Under the topic of member specific items, the following subjects were discussed:

- Bill Suber presented a recommendation to shorten the timeframe for reporting of millage rates to the property appraiser. His reason for proposing the concept was an efficiency measure to speed up the TRIM notification to taxpayers. Jim Zingale stated that the Department will provide members with a timeline to clarify the framework involved in developing statewide revenue estimates, producing current year tax rolls, extending millage and completing the TRIM process within the counties.
- Karl Zimmerman reviewed his recommendation that the tax collector's telephone number be removed from the TRIM notice and replaced with numbers for the levying authorities. He explained that the change would provide taxpayers with better information on the TRIM notice. The current law requires the tax collector's phone number to be on the notice, but tax collectors are unable to explain changes in millage rates to property owners and must direct them to the authorities levying the millage rates for information. The Chair requested that Sharon Outland and Morgan Gilreath provide the membership with information how they notify property owners of the name and phone numbers for taxing authorities in the TRIM notices their offices mail. Both members agreed to forward their forms to the Department for distribution to the membership.
- Jimmy Alvarez explained his reason for requesting data about the administrative cost per parcel for the property appraisers to develop assessments throughout the state. He proffered that the Auditor General's finding may suggest that the system should move to more reliance on fee appraisal methods versus the mass appraisal techniques currently in use. He requested the statistics to be distributed so members could understand that the limited resources currently in place necessitate a mass appraisal

methodology. Jim Zingale explained that neither the Auditor General's report or the PTA Action Plan recommends that the property appraisers move away from a mass appraisal methodology, but that both relate only to how the Department studies the tax rolls to develop estimated levels of assessment.

- Jimmy Alvarez also asked the Department to look at alternative methods of funding the Florida public school system and what would happen to other taxes should funding of schools come from a source other than local property taxes. Jim Zingale presented an alternate scenario identifying the increases needed in existing taxes should property taxes be eliminated as the primary source of funding school systems at the local level. No members requested this matter undergo further consideration.
- The Chair delayed consideration of Terry Lewis' item regarding a change in Florida's Constitution to provide special districts with the same immunity from taxation as is currently enjoyed by counties, school boards, and municipalities

FULL MEMBERSHIP ITEMS:

Other items of interest to the full membership were discussed in a facilitated session in order to prioritize items previously introduced and identified by the group as items of broad and general concern.

See attached flip chart replications headed "Full Membership Items-Charts #1, #2, #3, and #4," Attachment Pages 8 and 9, for an outline of the items that will remain as full membership topics.

[LUNCH BREAK]

FULL MEMBERSHIP ITEMS (Continued):

Jim Zingale began the afternoon session with a call for a hand vote to rank the importance of the full membership items discussed before the lunch break. See attached flip chart replications titled "Priority List" and "High/Medium Rankings, " Attachment Page 9.

The Chair provided a commitment to assign the staff to begin research on Items #4, #5, and #6 of the full membership list for the next meeting and begin research on Items #8 for future discussion.

At this point, the full membership broke out into the focus groups that were formed based on members' choices at the August 16, 2000, meeting.

ASSESSMENT APPEALS FOCUS GROUP SESSION-1:30 PM to 2:30 PM

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT: Keith Baker, Robert Banting, Bill Coleman, Bill Graham, Bob McKee, Sharon Outland, Bill Suber, and Vickie Weber.

The group facilitator explained that the afternoon's goal was to identify and clarify the specific problems with the assessment appeals process in Florida; identify root causes for the problems; look at desired outcomes; and identify the research and data needed from staff for the group to make recommendations to the full membership for possible solutions to the problems.

The first topic considered by this group was that of changing the name of the group from the Value Adjustment Board Focus Group to the Assessment Appeals Focus Group. Members voted unanimously to make the name change.

The group designated Bill Graham as spokesperson for the assessment appeals group.

Members were also asked to identify any additional items that they wanted to add to the list of items identified in earlier meetings. See Item Numbers 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 on attached flip chart reproductions titled "Assessment Appeals Focus Group-Charts #1, #2" for description of additional items, Attachment Pages 2, 3, and 4.

TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY FOCUS GROUP SESSION-1:30 PM to 2:30 PM

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT: Rod Adams, Jimmy Alvarez, Morgan Gilreath, Rene Lewis, Fred Meeker, Randy Miller, John Robinson, Ken Small, Karl Zimmerman

The facilitator explained that the afternoon's goal was to identify and clarify the specific problems with the tangible personal property assessment process in Florida; identify root causes for the problems; look at desired outcomes; and identify the research and data needed from staff for the group to make recommendations to the full membership for possible solutions to the problems.

The group designated Randy Miller as their spokesperson.

Note: Due to technical difficulty with new equipment, staff was unable to tape record this discussion. The attached reproduction of the flip charts made during the session provides an overview of the topics and items discussed during the session. See Attachment Pages 5, 6, and 7.

RECONVENE FULL MEMBER SESSION-2:30 PM to 2:50 PM

The Chair announced that the next meeting, by agreement at the August 16, 2000, meeting will be on January 10, 2001, and the general format and agenda for the meeting will be the same as the day's agenda with only minor changes where needed.

The Department is in the process of developing a common reporting format to provide interested parties with an update on the progress of the PTA Action Plan, as well as an update on the public workshops held to develop the Real Property Guidelines.

At the next meeting, the spokespersons for the focus groups will be asked to provide an assessment of the size of the problems identified and how long they think it will be before the group provides the Department with a work product and formal recommendations to the Executive Director.

Jim Zingale explained that if members feel this is an effective forum to review the existing property tax system, the agency asks for their individual and organizational support before the Legislature to extend the life of the group.

Summary Compiled By:

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